

DEFINITIONS

The following glossary is comprised of those terms used in this Instruction as well as a number of others, common to the records management field, most likely to be encountered by persons performing those functions at any level in an organization.

1. Access

a. The availability of or the permission to consult records, archives, **or** manuscripts.

b. The ability and opportunity to obtain security classified or administratively controlled information or records.

2. Accession Number. The control number given to any OSD functional element retiring records to a Federal Records Center. This number consists of the Record Group number, fiscal year in which the number was issued, and a four-digit sequential control number. The **accession number** is the basic reference for any records shipment and must be used when retrieving papers from any Federal Records Center. Accession numbers are issued and controlled by the Records Management Division. More information is contained in Enclosure 7 to this Instruction.

3. Archival Value. The determination by appraisal that records are worthy of permanent preservation by the Archivist of the United States. See also Historical Value.

4. Audiovisual Files. Files in pictorial or aural form, regardless of format. Included are still photos, graphic arts such as posters and original art, motion pictures, video recordings, audio or sound recordings, and related records.

5. Block. A chronological grouping of records consisting of one or more segments of Cutoff records that belong to the same series and are dealt with as a unit for the purposes of their efficient transfer, especially the transfer of permanent records to the NARA. For example, a transfer of records in 5-year blocks.

6. Case File. A folder or other file unit containing material on a specific action, event, person, place, project, or other subjects. Sometimes referred to as a **"project file"** or a **"transaction file."** Also a collection of such folders or other file units. Working Papers pertaining to case files, such as worksheets, questionnaires, rough notes, calculations, are

generally kept for a shorter period of time than the papers that **serve** to document the project.

7. Central File. The file of several **offices** or organizational units physically and/or functionally centralized and supervised in one location.

8. Chronological Reading File. See Reading File.

9. Closed File. A file unit or series containing documents on which action has been completed and to which additional documents are not likely to be added.

10. Convenience File. Extra copies of records, personal papers, or publications maintained for ease of access and reference. **Sometimes** known as 'personal **file**.' . .

11. Copy. A reproduction of the contents of an original document, prepared simultaneously or separately, usually identified by function or by method of creation. Copies identified by function may include action copy, comeback copy, file or record copy information or reference copy, **official** copy, and tickler copy. See Nonrecord Material and Records.

12. Cross-Reference. A procedure used to show the location of a document that may be filed, because of content, under more than one subject.

13. Current Files Area (CFA). That area where Current Records are physically maintained, usually in a location that provides convenient access for reference and retrieval.

14. Current Records. Records that are necessary for conducting the current business of an office and that must be maintained, therefore, in office space and equipment.

15. Custody. The guardianship of records that in a strict sense includes both physical possession (protective responsibility) and legal title (legal responsibility). For example, OSD records transferred to a Federal Records Center are in the PHYSICAL POSSESSION of that facility but legal title to them remains with the OSD and access may be granted only with the approval of the originating agency; when accessioned by the National Archives, legal title, and physical possession then pass to the Archivist of the United States, who may grant access without reference to the originating agency.

16. cutoff. Termination of files at specific intervals to permit transfer, retirement, or disposal in periodic (quarterly, semiannual, or annual) blocks. Sometimes called "file break."

17. Discontinuance. The placing of an organization in an inactive or surplus status. When the term is used in this Instruction, it includes inactivation, disbandment, discontinuance or reduction to zero in strength.

18. Disposal. Physical destruction of Temporary Records. See also Disposition.

19. Disposal Authority. The **legal** authorization for the disposal of records obtained from the Archivist of the United States empowering an agency to transfer Permanent Records to the NARA and **to** carry out the disposal of Temporary Records. Also called "**disposition** authority." - .

20. Disposal Period. The length of time, based on an event or a chronological period, during which a Series is retained before its authorized disposal.

21. Disposition. Actions taken with regard to records following their appraisal by the **NARA**. No disposition of any Series of records is authorized before its appraisal. Records disposition is any activity with respect to:

a. Disposal of temporary records no longer necessary for the conduct of business by destruction or donation;

b. Transfer of records to Federal Agency storage facilities or records centers;

c. Transfer to the Archives of the United States of records determined to have sufficient historical or other **value** to warrant continued presentation; or

d. Transfer **of** records from one Federal Agency to any other Federal Agency.

22. Disposition Instruction. An instruction for the Cutoff, Transfer Retirement or destruction of documents. Specific techniques for using or applying disposition instructions are in Enclosure 7 to this Instruction.

23. Disposition Program. Practices designed to achieve **efficient** and economical disposition of records. The program involves developing standards, procedures, and techniques for managing the longevity of records. Includes controls over office filing equipment, scheduling records **for** disposition and administering their storage, documenting agency benefits accruing from the program, and undertaking **surveys** and audits of disposal

operations.

24. Disposition Schedule. A document governing, on a continuing basis, the mandatory disposition of a record series of an organization or agency. Also known as a ***'records schedule," "records control schedule," '*retention schedule,"** or **"records retention schedule."** Enclosure 4 to this Instruction contains the only authorized Disposition Schedule for the OSD. See also General Records Schedule.

25. Disposition Standard. The time period for the Cutoff transfer to a records center, destruction, or transfer to the NARA of a file series.

26. Federal Information Resources Management Rerelation (FIRMR). Regulations on **information** resources management issued by the GSA and applicable to Federal Agencies.

27. Federal Property Management Regulations (FPRM). Regulations formerly issued by the GSA but superseded in part by the **FIRMR** and the **NARA's** records management regulations.

28. File An accumulation of records maintained in an approved physical arrangement. Used primarily in reference to current records in an office. In machine-readable terminology, two or more data records of identical layout treated as a unit. The unit is larger than a data record but smaller than a data system and is sometimes known as a **"data set."** Referred to collectively as **"files."**

29. File Inventory. A survey of agency records to gain **information** needed to develop a disposition schedule. Includes a descriptive listing of each record series of a system together with an indication of where it is located and other pertinent data.

30. Functional File System. This is a system of files arrangement based on the major functions by which the records **will** be retrieved. With Program Records or mission-related files, these functions mirror the office organization and reflect the nature of the work being done there. The OSD uses a functional file system. More information on this type of system is in Enclosure 5 to this Instruction.

31. Finding Aids. Indexes or other lists, whether manual or automated, that are designed to make it easier to locate relevant files.

32. Frozen Records. Those temporary records that cannot be destroyed on schedule because special circumstances, such as a **court** order, require a temporary extension of the approved retention period.

33. General Records Schedule (GRS). A schedule issued by the Archivist of the United States governing the disposition of specified recurring series common to several or all agencies of the Federal Government. These series include civilian personnel and payroll records, procurement, budget, travel, electronic, audiovisual and administrative management records. When records described in the GRS are used by any Federal Agency, their disposition is governed thereby. Exceptions may be granted only by the Archivist of the U.S. The GRS DOES NOT apply to an **Agency's** program records. **"Program records"** are those peculiar to an Agency's mission or not "common to several or **all** Agencies of **the** Federal Government.^{to}

34. Historical Value. The usefulness of records for historical research concerning the Agency of origin.

35. Holding Area. Agency space assigned for the temporary storage of active or semiactive records and for records with relatively short retention periods. Also known as a "staging area." The OSD Records Administrator operates a **small** holding area for records awaiting transfer to the Washington National Records Center.

36. Housekeeping Records. Records of an organization that relate to budget, fiscal, personnel, **supply, and similar** administrative or support operations normally common to most agencies, as distinguished from records that relate to an Agency's primary functions. See General Records Schedule.

37. Legal Value. The use of records containing evidence of legally enforceable rights or obligations of government and/or private persons.

38. Life Cycle of Records. The concept that records pass through three stages: creation, maintenance and use, and disposition.

39. Micrographics. The technique of producing miniature film images of documents for preservation and storage in compact form.

40. Noncurrent Records. Records that **are** no longer required in the conduct of current business and therefore can be transferred to a Federal Records Center or destroyed, if authorized by an approved disposition schedule.

41. Nonrecord Material. Material not usually included within the definition of Records, such as extra copies of documents, but only if the sole reason such copies are **preserved** is for convenience of reference; library and museum material, but only

if such material is made or acquired and **preserved** solely for reference or exhibition purposes; and stocks of publications. This latter category does not include record sets of publications, posters, and maps that serve as evidence of Agency activities and have value for the information they contain. See Personal Papers.

42. Permanent Records. Records appraised by the Archivist of the United States as having enduring value because they document the organization and functions of the Agency that created or received them and/or because they contain significant information on persons, things, problems, and conditions with which the Agency deals. The Archivist of the U.S. estimates that no more than 5 percent of all records generated by the Federal Government are permanent. In the OSD, they generally fall into the following **categories**.

a. Policy, Procedural, Organizational, or Reporting Documents.

(1) Formal policy and procedural issuances (obsolete as well as current) , such as regulations, orders, circulars, manuals, and other types of directives with related forms, recommendations, endorsements, clearances, and comments.

(2) Organizational charts and directories (obsolete as well as current) .

(3) **Annual** or other periodic narrative and statistical reports on accomplishments at the organizational levels above divisions.

(4) Narrative accounts of an Agency's history.

(5) Publicity and public information material, such as press releases on matters of general interest to taxpayers; photographs and official speeches on changes in OSD policies and programs; charts and posters.

(6) Publications that contribute to an understanding of the organization and the functioning of the OSD Components, exclusive of publications that embody the results of statistical or research activity.

b. Records That Provide Executive Direction to OSD Components.

(1) Such authoritative documents consist of those received by the OSD for comment, clearance, appraisal, evaluation, guidance, or other action, and those drafted, prepared, or issued by the OSD. Included are documents on legislation and executive orders proposed by the OSD or by other

Government Agencies, delegations, and continuing authorities and revocations thereof; interagency agreements; court decisions; internal and external interpretations and rulings; and legal opinions. Also, case, subject, planning, and control files documenting the preparation, issuance, analysis of, reactions to, and compliance with those authoritative documents that affect and define the functions of the OSD Component concerned.

(2) Legislative history files, exclusive of nonrecurring copies of hearings, bills, and statutes.

(3.) Agenda and minutes, with supporting papers, of staff meetings at division and higher organizational levels on substantive functions of the OSD or the Department of Defense.

(4) Agenda and minutes, with supporting papers, of those meetings of interagency and extra-Federal Governmental bodies in which OSD participates that relate to substantive matters on OSD or DoD functions.

(5) Reports on special studies, surveys, and inspections of operations, management, and systems with related papers showing their inception, scope, procedures, and results.

(6) Documents on relations with the White House, the Executive Office of the President, and the Congress, that concern the planning, initiation, management, and effectiveness of changes in **OSD's** programs, including interagency programs in which the OSD participates.

(7) Budget statements (estimates and justifications) prepared at the OSD level, budget digests, budget briefing books, and comprehensive program and financial plans developed under the planning, programming, and budgeting system and earlier or later equivalents, such as zero-base budgeting.

(8) Annual activity reports, and any special nonrecurring reports, from field offices that are required for executive directions.

(9) Interagency agreements and delegations of continuing authority to and from other agencies that significantly affect the substantive functions of the OSD.

(10) Case files on approved plans, policies, programs (including internal management improvement, records management, and staff development programs) , projects, and procedures.

(11) Litigant case files, the results of which had a significant impact on DoD policy or procedures.

c. Records Documenting Major Functions of OSD Components

(1) Documentation of the development, supervision, and evaluation of each of the major substantive functions.

(2) **Formal** legal opinions on major functions.

(3) **Case** files of **precedential** significance on policy formulation.

(4) Summary statistical data on each major function.

(5) Pertinent portions of office files of directorates or higher **organizational** units that were responsible for carrying out major substantive functions of the OSD or Department of Defense, or both.

(6) Pertinent portions of office records, if the substantive functions were administered from the field.

43. Personal Papers. Papers of a private or nonofficial character that pertain only to an individual's personal affairs that are kept in the office of a Federal official and clearly designated by that official as nonofficial. Personal papers are required to be filed separately from official records of the office. See enclosure 10 to this Instruction for additional guidance.

44. Program Records. Records created or received and maintained by an Agency in the conduct of the substantive (as opposed to administrative) or Housekeeping functions or the mission for which it is responsible. Sometimes called "**operational** records."

45. Reading File. A file containing copies of documents, usually outgoing correspondence, arranged in chronological order. Sometimes referred to as a "**chron** file," or 'chronological reading filer'

46. Record Copy. The official, or file, or coordination copy created by an action office, complete with coordination, enclosures, or related background papers that form a complete file or history of that action.

47. Record Group. A body of organizationally related records established by the NARA to keep track of Agency records during and after the scheduling process, including those transferred to Federal records centers and/or the National Archives. The record group for the OSD is 330; other elements of the Department of Defense are assigned their own record group numbers.

48. Records. All books, papers, maps, photographs, **machine-**readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an Agency of the U.S. Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that Agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the **organization, functions, policies, decisions,** procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of data in them. See also Nonrecord Material.

49. Records Control Schedule. A listing prepared by each OSD office-identifying the records series, **filing** arrangement, and ultimate disposition of all files maintained. See enclosure 4 to this **Instruction** for more detail.

50. Records Center. A facility, sometimes specially designed and constructed, for the low-cost, efficient storage and furnishing of reference service on semicurrent records pending their ultimate disposition. Generally, this term refers to the Federal records centers maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration, but provisions exist, providing stringent criteria are met, to permit individual Federal agencies to create their own records centers or to contract this service out to civilian enterprises.

51. Records Center Container. A corrugated cardboard box designed to hold one cubic foot of records, either **legal** or letter size, and used chiefly in records centers. These are the only containers authorized for shipment of OSD records to a Federal Records Center. See enclosure 8 to this Instruction for more details.

52. Records Management. That area of general administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, use and maintenance, and disposition of records.

53. Records Manager. The person responsible for or engaged in a records management program. Sometimes called records officer or records administrator.

54. Reference Copies. A collection of extra copies of official records on a specific action used for ready reference.

55. Retention Period. The time period for which a specific series of records is to be kept. Also called "retention standard."

56. Retirement. The movement of inactive files having a permanent or long-term value to a Federal Records Center for storage, servicing, and ultimate disposition. See Transfer.

57. Screening. The examination of records to determine the presence of extraneous material (extra copies, classified cover sheets, mail control forms, **envelopes, routing slips** (except those with remarks of significant value) , blank forms, etc.) before filing and before Transfer or Retirement.

58. Series. File units or documents arranged in accordance with an approved filing system. Also called "record series."

59. Technical Reference Files. Extra copies of articles, periodicals, reports, studies, vendor catalogs, and similar **materials** that are needed for reference and information but are properly a part of **the** office's records.

60. Temporary Records. Records designated for retention for a specified period of time and that are then authorized to be destroyed in the current files area. Temporary records are most commonly found among Housekeeping Records and administrative files.

61. Transfer. The movement of records out of office space and equipment to a depository but not necessarily a Federal Records **Center**. See Retirement.

62. Unscheduled Records. Records for which no ultimate disposition has been determined.

63. Vital Records. Documents essential to the continued functioning or reconstitution of an organization during and after an emergency and also those documents essential to protecting the rights and interests of that organization and the individuals directly affected by its activities. Sometimes called "vital files" or "essential records." These records include both emergency-operating and right-and-interests records that are duplicates or extra copies of original records stored off-site.

64. Washington National Records Center. The official off-site repository for all OSD records. The **WNRC** is located at Suitland, MD. Other centers may be designated by OSD Field Activities not located in the Washington Metropolitan Area, but not without the concurrence of the particular Federal Records Center concerned. Such agreements eventually must be reflected in that Agency's records disposition schedule.

65. Working Papers. Documents such as rough notes, calculations, or drafts assembled or created and used in the preparation or analysis of other documents. An accumulation of working papers may also include Nonrecord Material.